

Message Text

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42

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 RSR-01 PM-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 /048 W

----- 116809

R 181135Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4773

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

CDR JCRC NKP RTAFB

COMUSMACTHAI

CH USDEL FPJMT 2950

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COMUSMACTHAI FOR PAO

E.O. 11652 NA

TAGS: CASC, OTRA, MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: PW/MIA: TRAVEL BY "VIVA"GROUP

REF: A. SAIGON 12673/131245Z JUL 73 NOTAL

B. STATE 127322/282138Z JUN 73

1. VIVA GROUP (MRS. COPPIN, MRS. SHELTON, MR. FRANK, AND MR. MILNER) SPENT TWO HOURS AT EMBASSY ON JULY 17 IN ONE AND A HALF HOUR INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF MIA ISSUE WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS JOINED BY USDEL FPJMT, DAO, AND JCRC REPRESENTATIVES. EMBASSY AND DCM (THEN CHARGE) MET GROUP AND PARTICIPATED PART OF THE TIME. USDEL FPJMT REPS LED OFF MEETING WITH BRIEF PRESENTATIONS OUTLINING US EFFORTS IN THE RVN TO ACQUIRE INFORMATION ON US AND THIRD CONTRY MIA. REMAINDER OF MEETING TAKEN UP BY QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION AND STATEMENT BY MRS. COPPIN OF VIVA'S VIEWS, OBJECTIVES, AND CONCERNS.

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2. AS EXPECTED VIVA GROUP FOCUSED ITS ATTENTION ON THOSE MIA WHOM WE BELIEVE, BASED ON HARD INTELLIGENCE, THE OTHER SIDE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT. MRS. COPPIN EMPHASIZED THAT VIVA ALSO WANTS TO AVOID RAISING FALSE HOPES AMONG FAMILIES, THAT ORGANIZATION'S AIM IS NOT TO PROVE MIA ARE ALIVE, BUT RATHER TO SECURE AN ACCOUNTING FROM OTHER SIDE. GROUP LISTENED ATTENTIVELY TO DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENTS AND PRESENT IMPASSE IN FPJMT. MRS. COPPIN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT SINCE JANUARY CEASE-FIRE USG HAS NOT "DEMANDED" AN ACCOUNTING FOR THE CURRENT

STATUS OF THOSE PW ON WHICH THE OTHER SIDE SHOULD HAVE KNOWLEDGE AND ACCOMPANIED THE DEMANDS WITH MEANINGFUL POLITICAL LEVERAGE. SHE SAID GROUP REALIZES QUESTION OF POLITICAL LEVERAGE IS ONE TO BE DEALT WITH IN WASHINGTON. SHE ALSO EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN THAT NUMBER OF RECENT STATEMENTS BY HIGH US OFFICIALS WOULD ENCOURAGE HANOI TO BELIEVE THAT TOP LEVELS OF US GOVERNMENT ARE NO LONGER TREATING THIS AS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE AND THEREFORE TO REMAIN UNCOOPERATIVE. SHE CITED PRESIDENT NIXON'S RECENT KANSAS CITY STATEMENT THAT FOR FIRST TIME IN EIGHT YEARS THERE ARE NO US POW'S; ALLEGED RECENT STATEMENT BY DEPUTY DEFENSE SECRETARY THAT "ALL POWS IN INDOCHINA ARE DEAD"; AND ALLEGED STATEMENTS BY UNNAMED DOD OFFICIALS SUGGESTING THAT A PUBLIC OUTCRY OVER THE OTHER SIDE'S FAILURE TO PROVIDE MIA INFORMATION WOULD BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE AT THIS POINT IN TIME. SHE ALSO DECLARED THAT DOD HAS NOT PROVIDED CERTAIN (UNNAMED) PW/MIA FAMILIES WITH CURRENT UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION ON THEIR RELATIVES.

3. MRS. COPPIN SAID VIVA HAS EMBARKED ON CAMPAIGN TO AROUSE AND APPLY THE PRESSURE OF WORLD AS WELL AS US PUBLIC OPINION TO FORCE HANOI TO REVISE ITS PRESENT STAND ON THE MIA QUESTION. VIVA HOPES THAT ITS EFFORTS WILL INDUCE OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO BECOME INVOLVED AND TAKE UP THE ISSUE WITH NVN AUTHORITIES. SHE WILL VISIT JAPAN SHORTLY TO TRY TO STIMULATE JAPANESE YOUTH ON THIS ISSUE.

4. AT THE END OF THE MEETING MR. FRANK REQUESTED A COPY OF THE MIA LIST OF 105 NAMES SUBMITTED BY USDEL FPJMT TO THE OTHER SIDE ON APRIL 17. WE ARE DECLINING FOR REASONS GIVEN US IN DOD/STATE GUIDANCE RECEIVED TELEPHONICALLY.

COMMENT: VIVA GROUP SEEMED MOST APPRECIATIVE THAT MISSION OFFICERS HAD DISPLAYED CANDOR IN DESCRIBING PRESENT STATUS OF MIA ISSUE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REASSURED THAT WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO PRESS THE OTHER SIDE FOR MIA INFORMATION. MRS. COPPIN DID NOT VOLUNTEER ANY INFORMATION ON HER SAIGON SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES, MERELY STATING THAT GROUP WAS PLANNING TO STAY HERE "FOUR OR FIVE DAYS." END COMMENT.

5. AS TELEGRAM WAS BEING TYPED, MRS. COPPIN TELEPHONED EMBASSY TO INFORM US THAT SHE HAD CONTACTED PRG DELEGATION INFORMATION OFFICER WHO IN RESPONSE TO HER REQUEST, STATED THAT PRG WOULD

WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND DISCUSS ISSUES AND THAT ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE THROUGH USDEL TO FPJMT. SHE PLANS TO TAKE INTERPRETER ARRANGED BY VIETNAMESE CONTACT AND PREFERS NOT TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY USG REPS. SHE IS ALSO SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH DRV DELEGATION AND HAS VOLUNTEERED TO INFORM US IN FULL OF HER MEETINGS WITH COMMUNISTS.

6. FOR BANGKOK AND JCRC: MRS. COPPIN INFORMS US SHE HAS TELEPHONED JCRC COMMANDER, GENERAL KINGSTON, AND HAS SECURED HIS PERMISSION FOR GROUP TO VISIT JCRC HQS. AT NKP. ASSUME EMBASSY AND JCRC WILL COLLOABORATE IN OBTAINING RTG PERMISSION FOR VISIT TO THAI AIR BASE IF REQUIRED.
MARTIN

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